

1490..ee.50
TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH:

O R, T H E

FALL OF PROBUS.

A P O E M.

By JOHN AVEYMORE.

L O N D O N:

**PRINTED FOR J. P. COGHLAN, DUKE-STREET,
GROSVENOR-SQUARE.**

(PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIX-PENCE)

Anyone (Sm)

TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH

THE

FAIL OF US



OF A

THE BORN IN A LION'S PAW

THE BORN IN A LION'S PAW

THE BORN IN A LION'S PAW

TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH:
OR, THE
FALL OF PROBUS.

HOW greatest crimes from least beginnings flow,
(As smallest sparks to conflagrations grow)
How still Temptations from each other spring:
Propitious Muse from sure example sing!

PROBUS was once the darling of the age,
Humble though virtuous, and though youthful, sage
To him, as to a regulating clock,
His pastor sent the graceless of the flock;

B

Reform,

2 TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH: OR,

" Reform, said he, your movements : well you know
 " The wise, the righteous Probus acts not so :
 " Just as you see that faultless index, go.

Wedded to wisdom, brighter beams direct
 Sublimar paths which saints alone protect,
 And while on virtues sacred base he stood,
 He never sought applause for doing good :
 Nor strove by means oblique to raise his name,
 On the fall'n ruins of a neighbour's fame ;
 The drunkard's slipp'ry path he never trod,
 Nor, e'er pursu'd the gambler's crooked road :
 Was never charg'd with fraud or avarice,
 And, though a Miller never *mulctur'd* twice *.

Whilst every virtue in his soul was found,
 Those virtues all with *modesty* were crown'd ;
 For he was chaster than the fleecy snow,
 Which cools the flames that on Mount § Hecla glow :

* That is, *never exacted double dues*,—a North-country phrase.

§ A burning mountain in the North, whose top is covered with snow all the year.

Pure as the wintry isicles which fall,
In beauteous forms from some cold northern wall ;
His heart a stranger to all lewd desires,
Still shunn'd the scorching of unhallow'd fires :
Well knowing Nature's weakness, he withstood,
The first assaults of tempting flesh and blood,
Guarding his looks, and flying from each fair
That might decoy him into beauty's snare :
A female hand, or ev'n a female's glove,
He durst not touch, *for fear of catching love* ;
Much less *himself* with curls or powder's aid,
Would he allure to sin the giddy maid,
Or with loose airs, or wanton, speaking eye,
Force from the tender virgin's breast a sigh !
Balls he detested, dances he abhorr'd,
Nor lov'd the pleasures of the bridal board ;
But at each fun'ral he a guest appears,
And leaves a house of mirth for that of tears.
Full oft' he said, that Grief the heart refin'd
While Pleasure's honey—left a sting behind ;

And

4 TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH: OR,

And feasts and flowing bowls were dang'rous found,
When the pulse heighten'd, and the jest went round :---
These he avoids with care, and seems to be
Another Joseph in epitomé.

Such Probus *was* / but O uncertain state
Of poor weak mortals !---Who can read his fate !
Lo ! all these virtues soon must fade away,
And all these laurels wither and decay !
Ev'n as some flow'r, of late the garden's pride,
With odours rich, with Tyrian colours dy'd,
Which now some clown's unhallow'd hand hath torn,
From its green stem, and in short triumph borne,
To fair or wake, then as the dance went round,
In frolic humour cast it on the ground,
Where lost in filth its blossom must decay,
And all its boasted glories fade away.

But what strange means could such a change effect,
Satan's dire malice, or the saint's neglect ?

Both,

THE FALL OF PROBUS.

5

Both, both, too sure concurr'd to give the blow,
The Saint's neglect, and malice of the Foe!
Learn hence ye sons of virtue to beware,
And baffle evil, by a constant care:
Lest while you think yourselves the most secure,
The Fiend assault, and make his conquest sure.

The Evil One had long employ'd his art
To vanquish Probus, and ensnare his heart:
An hundred shapes he took:—now in the form
Of some strange fair bewilder'd in a storm,
Would cry for help—some simple country lass,
Would next lie careless, sporting on the grass,
Or, waiting fitter season, with a smile,
Request his aid to pass the neighb'ring stile:
At other times the Fiend from Sally's tongue,
Would court good Probus with a wanton song,
Or from the rustling robes of Læda pour
Love's whole artill'ry in some fav'ring hour,

C

Nor

6 TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH: OR,

Nor thus alone:—when day's long task was done,
He left him not with the departing sun,
But still in dark delusions of the night,
Presents lascivious visions to his sight.

Awake, asleep, by night as well as day,
At home, abroad, or journeying on the way,
At kirk, or fair, the Dev'l pursued his game,
His means were various but his end the same,
That end pursued in vain, for still he miss'd his aim,
Howe'er at length, upon one fatal day,
It chanc'd that Probus went betimes to pray:
“ Search says the Proverb for a house of pray'r,
“ And Satan surely builds a chapel there,”
'Tis truly said;—and so our Probus found,
Who deem'd himself secure on hallow'd ground,
—His pray'r was long:—first, fervently he pray'd,
That Heav'n would always grant him needful aid:
Grace to his heart;—and water for his mill,
That now for months together had stood still:

He

THE FALL OF PROBUS. 7

He pray'd that wheat might fall and flour might rise,
 He pray'd for sudden death to rats and mice,
 He pray'd that witches spells or warlocks spite,
 Might never stop his wheels from going right,
 And that the robber never might invade
 His little property, and spoil his trade.

—Next for the state:—he begg'd that wealth and ease,
 Might flourish beauteous in the lap of peace :
 That George the Third his country's fire and friend,
 To either ocean might his reign extend,
 He begg'd the nation's council might debate,
 Without descending to low Billingsgate,
 He begg'd our patriot B---'s and our B---k's,
 Might act like christians tho' they speak like Turks :
 He begg'd for many a patriot in this land,
 What many want, and many would demand
 For patriot senators (a worthy host)
 A peerage, or a pension, or a post,

For

8 T E M P T A T I O N ' S T R I U M P H : O R ,

For patriot citizens, a turtle feast,
For patriot porters, beef and beer at least,
For patriot scribblers, ink to blacken worth,
For patriot mobs, fresh filth to throw at N---,
For those deserted by their patriot fellows,
He begg'd, to end their woes, a peaceful gallows.

He begg'd for nobles grace to do no ill,
And sense for juries, and for doctors skill,
For country 'squires, less acres or more merit,
Health for the soldier, for the sailor spirit,
For frugal farmers rich and plenteous crops,
For lawyers and attorneys, hempen ropes ;
For ev'ry pious parson in the nation,
That ornaement of parsons, *moderation*,
For his own priest,---he begg'd that he might make,
His sermons shorter, for his hearers sake,
Or that his audience, better Christians grown,
Might bear his long ones patient for their own.

—He

—He pray'd for father, mother, neighbours, friends,
 And wish'd them all long lives and happy ends ;
 He pray'd for cousin Bell and cousin Ann,
 And begged for each a young and handsome man :
 He pray'd that aunty Jane might die a nun,
 That uncle James might never have a son,
 That Cleopatra's foal might prove a mare,
 With other prayers as righteous and as rare :
 He pray'd for every sinner in the parish,
 And at each name, cry'd " Gracious Heaven hear us !"
 ---For liars, swearers---Ralph the infidel,
 Thomas that tipples, Bob and Joss, that steal,
 He pray'd for cens'ring Pegg, and scolding Tibbs,
 Fanny that flatters, Ele'nor that fibbs :
 Lewd Bess, sly Barbara, and many more :---
 He pray'd---such pray'rs as ne'er were pray'd before,

Such praying, and such zeal, you may be sure,
 The Devil could not for his soul endure :
 He meditates revenge, yet scarce did know,
 How, when, or where to aim the deadly blow !

D

He

10 TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH: OR,

He therefore summon'd all th' infernal crew,
With whom t'advise what steps he must pursue,
To gain his ends 'gainst Probus and o'erthrow
The hated virtue of so great a foe.
The black infernals at his call repair,
To the mid regions of surrounding air,
Dæmons of lust, of pride and sordid gain,
Of Rage, of Malice, Envy and Disdain :
With ev'ry fiend that prompts to wicked deeds,
And ev'ry spright that evil motions breeds :
Conven'd in counsel Satan told his plan,
And shew'd the spot, and pointed out the man,
To ev'ry sep'rate goblin he apply'd,
But most depended upon Lust and Pride,
By these the greatest saints and heroes fell,
And these maintain the empire still of hell.
" Or let us with presumption fill his mind,
" Or his weak heart in am'rous fetters bind,
" The rest is easy :--- when such seed is sown,
" The future harvest must be all our own."

---He

---He said. and paus'd---just then a form he view'd
 A female form that near a temple stood,
 Prepar'd to enter ;---strait he cries aloud,
 " Haste Asmodeus---mingle with the crowd,
 " Bring yonder woman where the glowing flames,
 " Warm the cold hearts of pious northern dames,
 " Then wait for Probus,---him with dextrous care
 " Myself will find, and for thy dart prepare."

Then Asmodeus hastily withdrew :
 The grand impostor to the temple flew !
 In form a zealot, who with lifted hands,
 In the mid circle close by Probus stands :
 Then views the saint around, but finds each place
 Cover'd with clothes, or shielded o'er with grace.

At last a small round hole in stocking heel,
 Which had by chance escap'd the darning steel :
 The traitor 'spy'd---and there resolv'd t'assail,
 Too sure, alas ! his mischief wou'd prevail :

He

Sudden, He breath'd a blast of pois'nous air,
 Upon the guiltless heel expos'd and bare,
 (Achilles' only vulnerable part
 Expos'd like his, receiv'd the fatal dart)
 The guiltless heel receiv'd the chilling breeze.
 And Probus felt himself that instant freeze,
 He rose abrupt and left th' unfinish'd pray'r,
 Nor saw, blind mortal, the impending snare,
 Yet was he not without a warning :---Thrice
 His guardian angel bade him not arise,
 And when aris'n, admonishing in vain,
 Thrice he inspir'd him to kneel down again.

Alas ! his lot was cast ;---with speed he hies :
 When he perceives enticing flames arise,
 Not such as fervent, holy zeal inspire,
 Where pious bosoms burn with heav'nly fire,
 For Rath---n---s *, cold as snow,
 Need mortal fires to make devotion glow,

* A dissenting congregation in the North of Scotland.

Not so of old, when PERSECUTION reign'd,
 And PENAL LAWS their Liberty restrain'd;
 To barns or byres, at midnight hours they'd run,
 And watch with patience till the rising sun;
 Oft' have I view'd them, in the days of G--r,
 Squeez'd in a cote, till ev'ry heart would pant,
 Oft' have I seen them, in the self-same hour,
 Now freeze with cold, now sweat at every pore
 Oft' have I seen them on some crowded day,
 O'erpowr'd with heat sink down and faint away.
 At length their fate allow'd them some repose,
 And straight a proud and spacious temple rose:
 But how uncertain, Fortune, are thy ways!
 This spacious temple scarcely thrice three days
 Had they possess'd, when hell and Pr--gle's hate,
 Join to reduce them to their former state:
 Their former state, more dark and dismal grown,
 From the short glimpse of light that had been shown.

14 TEMPTATION'S TRIUMPH: OR,

But various changes past, Heav'n's pity lent,
H-y (like another Nehemiah sent)
Who, fill'd with zeal, from ev'ry quarter calls,
His scatter'd brethren, to repair their walls,
With speed unspeakable the walls are rear'd,
And Sion's songs once more within them heard,
Once more the preacher ev'ry heart controlls,
And pours the words of life into their souls:
Their hungry souls with nourishment supply'd,
Next for the body's service they provide,
—Seats for their ease and for their bonnets *books*,
Rests for their elbows, *tables* for their books,
To hang their coats and mantles, *wooden pins*,
Stools for their feet, and safeguards for their shins.
Thus they who scarce had room to stand before,
In large convenient pews, now sit---and *snore*;
Whom erst in puddle kneeling you might see,
Now without cushion cannot bend a knee.

Yet

Yet were they not content :---The more was granted,
 (Such Nature's cravings) still the more they wanted,
 At last a Fire they want, a Fire they have;
 Th' indulgent man whate'er they wanted gave,
 Oh ! had he been permitted but to know,
 What certain evils from that Fire would flow,
 The boon had been deny'd !---'Twas at that fire,
 That Kitty first conceiv'd a lewd desire,
 'Twas there that heedless Eppy lost her heart,
 And first was stung with Cupid's pois'nous dart,
 'Twas there that blear-ey'd Bell grew blind, and there
 That Sarah slept, and burn'd her common pray'r,
 There first Euphemia burn'd for Lionel,—
 And, (worst of all) 'twas there that Probus fell.

Thither he went, with a design to stay,
 No longer than his cold was driv'n away,
 But, ah ! how dang'rous to indulge desire,
 The more he stay'd the more he lik'd the fire,

Him

Him Satan follow'd close ; and hear at hand—
 With In----s Asmodeus took his stand,
 Unwilling to depart, now Probus says
 " He surely, prays the best who warmest prays!
 " Had I but here my former station made,
 " How many Litānies might I have said,
 " To yon, cold place no more will I return,
 " But here while body basks, the soul shall burn!"
 Unthinking Probus! Ah! thou little know'st
 What quenchless coals against thyself thou blow'st.

Just as this reas'ning he had mutter'd o'er,
 His wand'ring eyes a female form explore:
 A lady comes; no sprightly blooming maid,
 Nor in the pomp of bridal robes array'd,
 But weak and wither'd, toothless, grey and old,
 And sable robes her puny limbs enfold;
 In any other figure had she come,
 Probus had shunn'd her and escap'd his doom:

But

But Asmodeus now prepar'd his dart,
 And pierc'd with ease unguarded Probus' heart,
 First then the faint who felt his bosom glow,
 Loos'd his tight garment, and receiv'd the blow,
 Now on the matron as he turns his eyes,
 Unusual passions in his breast arise,
 She feigns a chilliness, and either arm
 Between his hands intreats that he would warm,
 He unsuspecting, the desire obeys,
 And on her slender wrists his finger lays,
 Scarce on those wrists his fingers he had laid,
 When, strange to tell! she seem'd a blooming maid,
 Her wrinkles change to smiles, her hollow eyes
 Grow bright as Juno's; and her breasts arise,
 Ambrosial odours from her tresses flow,
 And on her cheeks enchanting blushes glow;
 —For you must know (to tell the truth no sin is)
 Satan conceal'd himself in Mrs. In—s.

Struck like a lifeless statue, Probus stands,
 Yet still he gazes, still he holds her hands :
 'Till subtle Love, without perception gains
 His inmost heart, and throbs in all his veins ;
 At length o'ercome he sinks into her arms,
 And falls a victim to fictitious charms.

The feat atchiev'd, away the Devil flew,
 And with him Asmodeus strait withdrew,
 Pleas'd with their triumph and resolv'd to tell,
 The story grateful to the host of hell :
 To Pandæmonium they in haste resort,
 The Dæmons summon'd, crowd th' infernal court !
 *As when man's first transgression was declar'd,
 Which lost him Eden and his angel guard ;
 So from his throne sublime this tale he told,
 And in Hell's records strait it was enroll'd,
 With loud applause all Pandæmonium rung,
 The fall of Probus yell'd from ev'ry tongue ;

* See Milton's Paradise Lost.

And

And, to perpetuate the illustrious deed,
A solemn annual meeting was decreed,
At which, each Dæmon was enjoin'd to bring,
Some new apostate to th' infernal king,
Or of some mortal certain news relate,
Whom wanton wiles betray'd to evil fate.—
—Thus they below rejoic'd in the disgrace,
While the poor victim hides his blushing face,
Courts the dire shades from chearful light retires,
And mourns *the burning of unhallow'd Fires.*

Warn'd by the strain, ye Righteous shun his fate,
Or, trust the Muse, you may repent too late.
When in yourselves you venture to confide,
Then think on Probus and forget your pride,
Probus the good, who by a Female fell,
And, falling, made a Holiday in Hell.

F I N I S.

While the new bill is before the standing committee,

Count the thin blades from the right side.

1971



